## A Message from Supervisor Mary N. Piepho

Preparing for an Emergency

In light of the many recent natural disasters around the world including most recently, the earthquake in Pakistan, it is important that every family is properly prepared for an emergency. With this in mind, I would like to get families thinking and talking about what to do in case of an emergency so that they feel confident that there is a plan in place.

First, families should have a meeting to make sure each family member knows where safe places are in the house in case of an earthquake. It is also important to make sure that all exits out of the house are clear. Next, determine two meeting places, one outside of the home and another outside of the neighborhood in case the streets near your home are closed or inaccessible. Also, choose a family member or friend who lives out of state to be a point of contact to ensure that if your family gets separated, you will be able to find each other.

Preparation of your home is also a key element in minimizing the amount of damage and injury caused by an earthquake. Remove all large objects including picture frames and mirrors from above the bed and make sure to secure china cabinets and bookcases to the wall. Install smoke detectors on each level of your home and in each bedroom and test the batteries twice yearly. It is also a good idea to make a video tape of the contents of your home and keep it in a safe-deposit box. Photocopies of credit cards and drivers licenses should also be kept in a safe-deposit box along with birth certificates and other indispensable documents.

Lastly, every home should have an emergency supply kit which includes a radio, flashlight, batteries, non-perishable food items, bottled water, blankets, candles and matches, pet supplies, toiletries and a host of other daily necessities which could sustain the family for up to seven days or more.

To see a complete list of the recommended emergency supply kit and for other additional information, visit the County Office of the Sheriff's website at <a href="www.cocosheriff.org">www.cocosheriff.org</a>, and click on Office of Emergency Services.

It is important that we all take time to prepare our families now so that in the event of an emergency, we will have peace of mind knowing that our family has been properly prepared for a crisis.